i could've been so many things
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by mistyheartrbs

Summary

It's been a whole year since that day.

Notes

Here's some Ryuketsu-ish angst with a side of Ryumako. The title's from "A Long Time Ago" by First Aid Kit. Enjoy.

See the end of the work for more notes

He's dead. It's been a year, a whole year since she saw him die, she saw him burn into ashes to protect her. It's been a year, so why does it still hurt? Isn't this stuff supposed to fade after a while? That's what the stories say, anyway, so why does she keep on thinking that he's going to come back?

She remembers how desperate she was in those first few months - she wouldn't admit it to anyone, but a small part of her held onto some stupid hope when she learned that those terrifying, deadly clones were made of Life Fibers. If there were still Life Fibers in the world, she could bring him back, right? Right? Satsuki said that it was impossible, that Senketsu was a living being and couldn't just be recreated. Ryuko knew that better than anyone, she knew that Senketsu wasn't just some weapon, but that didn't make it any easier to know that he was really and truly dead.

They could've lived together. Sure, it would've seemed strange to people who didn't understand - a girl and a uniform, even she knew how ridiculous that sounded. Still, the two of them would've beaten the odds and had a normal life, free of Ragyo's threats.

The incomprehensible duo could've had something a bit like a regular life, but all Ryuko had to remember was the endless memory of falling, falling, falling as that idiot decided to be her shield, finally burning to a flash of light before disappearing forever. All she had was a thought of what could've been. It would've been so easy, so painfully easy, for her to rip off a scrap of fabric or use herself as a shield, but she didn't and now that dumb uniform is dead and gone and she'll never see him again and-

"Ryuko-chan?"

Ryuko looked up, her face streaked with tears. She hadn't even realized that she was crying. She wondered how long Mako had been standing there.

"Hm?"

"It's about time we went on our second date, don't you think?" The other girl flashed a cheerful grin, extending a hand to help Ryuko up.

"Yeah," Ryuko murmured. "Yeah, I guess it is."

"Say, it's pretty warm out, do you need that scarf?" Mako inquired. Ryuko looked at the red fabric wrapped around her neck; she hardly ever took it off. It reminded her of the life she might've had, it was her way to make sure she wouldn't forget him, but it was far more uncomfortable than she'd admit.

"I suppose not," she chuckled. The scarf fell to the floor as she walked outside, hand in hand with someone she loved, someone who wasn't going to leave any time soon.

End Notes

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